

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-11 are pending.

Claims 1-11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yoshie et al. (JP 2002060127 A).

The present invention makes it possible to perform variable folding processes, particularly an inward three-fold process and a Z-fold process, by making use a common folding section such as, for example, the same sheet convey path from a first crease forming unit to a second one which are mounted in a sheet post-processing apparatus. In other words, in case of setting folding process modes, a change from the inward three-fold process to the Z-fold process and vice-versa can be done only by controlling respective positions of first and second abutting members 78 and 86, because the inward three-fold process or the Z-fold process can be easily set by only selecting a process mode through a mode setting unit. By the foregoing structure, the present invention can provide a sheet post-processing apparatus effective in simplifying the structure thereof, reducing the apparatus volume, and reducing the manufacturing cost.

On the contrary, Yoshie et al. provides a sheet folding apparatus which can perform an inward three-fold process shown in Fig. 5 of this cited reference. However, there is no disclosure or teaching with respect to the mode setting unit for selecting the folding process mode as well as a control for changing the folding process mode, particularly changing from the inward three-fold process to the Z-fold process and vice-versa.

Claims 1-11 have rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Tamura et al. (US 6,746,390). Applicants are co-filing herewith a declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131. The rejection is therefore rendered moot and removal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

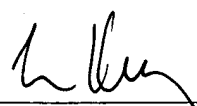
Since all claims are in a condition for allowance, please issue a Notice of Allowability so stating. Should the Examiner have any questions or concerns, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney of record.

Respectfully submitted,

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